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CONSIDERATIONS

FOR THE

Promoting of Agriculture,

A N D

EMPLOYING

T H E

POOR.

By R. L. V. M. J. E. Robert L. V.

Discount Moleworth



D U B L I N:

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(1723)

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1651/389.

P O O R



Printed by J. G. & Co. at the
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Whitehall



TO THE
GENTLEMEN
Of the HONOURABLE
House of Commons
OF
IRELAND.

GENTLEMEN,



Our Honourable House
having under it's Con-
sideration the Heads
of some Bills for the
better providing for, and em-
ploying the Poor. And the Bu-
siness of *Agriculture* being (next
to

to that of the *Fishery*) one of the most easy and profitable Ways that can be thought of for that Purpose. The Writer of the following Sheets, cannot more properly Dedicate them than to You, who have lately given an eminent Instance of Your Wisdom and Love to Your Country, in Your just Censure and vigorous Resolutions against a Patent calculated to destroy Your Trade, rob You of Your Mony; and which calls You Slaves and Fools to Your Faces. I know not what good Thing may not be expected further from an Assembly which both understands and dares do it's Duty. I am not so vain, as to think that all that I have here written is of Importance, but some Hints I have given in haste, which being improved

ved by Gentlemen of greater Skill and Leisure, may be of Service to the Publick; the promoting of which, has always been the utmost Ambition of,

September
30th, 1723.

Your most humble Servant

R. L. V. M.



ved by Gentlemen of greater
Skill and Leisure, may be of
Service to the Publick: the pro-
moting of which, has always
been the utmost Ambition of

For the humble Service

September
30, 1773

R. A. O. M.





SOME
CONSIDERATIONS

FOR THE

Promoting of Agriculture, &c.

14. 4. 04.



THE dearth of Corn this
last Winter, and the in-
conveniencies which a-
rose from it, both in the
misery of the common
People, and the Expor-
tation of our Mony for damaged Goods,
(for so the most of it proved) shoud set
all heads a work to find out the *Causes*
of this Mischief, in order to provide pro-
per remedies for the future; which can-
not

not well be effected if we mistake the *Causes* from whence our Evils proceed.

Some impute it to the *Covetousness and Cruelty of Landlords, who set hard Bargains to their Tenants*: Some to the *Restraints put by Landlords upon Plowing*: Others again to the *Mismanagement and little forecast of Tenants*, who sell off their Corn as soon as they can, after Harvest, and keep little or nothing in reserve for the latter end of the year, wherewith to supply the Markets; but snatch at the present Gain without regard to what may happen seven or eight Months after: and 'tis most certain that there is not in any part of *Europe* such an inequality in Markets as among us. We have always either a *Glut* or a *Dearth*, very often there are not ten days distance between the extremity of the one and the other: Such a want of *Policy* is there (in *Dublin* especially) in the most important affair of *Bread*, without a plenty of which the Poor must starve.

These are every one of them true in a great Measure; but we are to consider from whence they arise, and endeavour



to prevent the *Source* and *Original* of them, for all these are the *Effects* rather than the *first Causes* of our Grievance.

I shall venture in one word to give my opinion, which is this, *That the whole Oeconomy of Agriculture is generally mistaken or neglected in this Kingdom.*

Either 'tis not understood, or 'tis thought below the consideration of the higher Ranks among us, and therefore not made the care of Parliaments as it ought to be, and as I hope it soon will be, if we be in earnest to employ and provide for the necessities of the Poor. 'Tis not putting them upon the Parish as they do in *England*, which will do our Business. We have Poor of several kinds, and must be differently treated; and besides, I hope we shall never imitate *England* in our provisions for the Poor, whatever we do in other matters; for altho' 'tis grown there so heavy a Tax (through the cheats in the Collection and Distribution) that in many places it exceeds eight Shillings in the Pound Rent, yet I know no Country where the real Poor are worse taken Care of.

Agriculture is not only a Science, but the most useful one to Mankind: The Inventors of every part of it have been thought worthy of Divine honours. The Encouragers of it both by Practice and Precept, have been the greatest Men in the most flourishing Kingdoms and Common-wealths: The ablest *Statesmen*, *Philosophers* and *Poets*, have made it their principal Care, and given the best instructions concerning it, as knowing it to be that whereon the Life and well-being of the Community depends.

I have often wondred (when I consider how long it is since this Kingdom of *Ireland* has been united and annexed to the Crown of *England*, and the *English* customs, as to Habit, Language, and Religion, have been encouraged and enjoyn'd by Laws) how it comes to pass, that we should be so long a time, and so universally Ignorant of the *English* manner of manageing our Tillage and Lands as we now are; or if we formerly knew them, how we came to fall off from that Knowledge and the Practice of it to such a degree, that the *English* Tenants who pay double the Rent to their Landlords
for

for their Acres (which are much shorter then the *Irish* Acres) are able notwithstanding to supply us with Corn at a moderate Price, over and above the incident Charges of Freight, Porterage, &c. and the hazard of the Seas, whilst we are often Starving, though our Soil, if rightly managed, does not come behind the best in *Britain*, take one with another, and I have at last determined with my self, that this must needs be thro' the difference in our Industry and Skill, for we see that an *English* Farmer on a small Holding (sometimes not exceeding twenty Acres) shall live clean and comfortably, Cloath himself, Wife, Children, and Family decently; eat warm Victuals once every day, if not oftner; pay his Rent punctually; whilst the condition of the *Irish* Farmer on a large Farm, is the very reverse of all this. Whoever makes a step over into *Cheshire* shall be convinced of this truth as soon as he puts his foot a Shore.

I know nothing is more commonly said, than Give your Tenant a good Bargain, Set him a long Lease, or a Lease of Lives, and you prevent these Mischiefs;

He will Build, Plant, Improve, Live neatly, and surrender your Farm at the Expiration of his time in good Condition. This may sometimes prove true, but I know by sad experience, that none of these encouragements are sufficient, unless your Tenant be both an understanding Man in the way of Husbandry, and a diligent honest Man; so that it seems necessary to enforce by Laws such a course of Husbandry, as shall constrain others of a contrary Disposition, to thrive and live Comfortably whether they will or no, and at the same time provide that the Landlord receive no Damage by the ill treatment of his Land. I have known some Tenants starve at half the Rent which others have grown rich upon!

But 'tis just People should be instructed, as well as compelled by Laws: At present every Tenant does with his Farm as he pleases (especially they who hold under old Leases) and that is what his Laziness, his Ignorance, or Dishonesty prompts him to, without regard to Covenants; rather setting his Landlord at defiance till the Lease be out, and in the mean time being unconcerned what may be

be the Event, even then relying, in case of a Suit of Law, upon what he calls a good Jury.

Some Man may say, shall I not manage the Land, which I pay Rent for, according as I think fit? I say, NO. Laws are often, and very wholsomly, prescribed for the Governanc^e of private Property; as in the *Linnen* and *Woolen* Manufacture, in the preserving of Beef, Butter, Hides, and Tallow, in the size and condition of Casks, and many other things. Why not for Corn and Land? which Import us as nearly at least, as any of those above mention'd?

If there be any Landlord so gripeing as to turn an old improving good Tenant out of his Farm, at the expiration of his Lease, let him suffer under the Obloquy of his Country, as such Landlords do in *Britain*, provided the Tenant give not the Cause to his Landlord for denying the continuance of his Holding.

For the Tenant must not imagine the Landlord wrongs him by demanding an encrease of Rent proportionable to the current rate of the product of his Farm.

If

It every Barrel of Bread-Corn, Drink-Corn, or Horse-Corn, if Wine, Flesh, Fish and all other necessaries for House-keeping, stands the Landlord in double now, to what it did thirty or forty Years ago, then the Landlord puts no hardship on his Tenant if he asks, double the old Rent, and if he gets it, 'tis plain the Landlord is not one farthing the Richer.

I have known many good old Tenants complain and cry out of their Landlords unjustly, and in a humour throw up their Farms, rather than comply with such a demand; when another able Tenant has taken it, perhaps at treble the old Rent, then have I seen the old Tenant repent his own oversight, and non-compliance, when it has been too late to remedy it: Tenants should also consider that our Mony is at least one thirteenth part worse now, than it was before the Revolution, when 'twas on the same foot as in *England*: By what steps it came to be otherwise I cannot at present recollect, but 'twas a fatal mistake in those who brought it about (if it were not the Bankers) and those who connived at it; and this Diminution of the value of our
Coin

Coin, affects only (and very greatly too) all the Landlords in the Kingdom, nor wou'd it be to the disadvantage of the Tenant if set right again, as I could plainly prove if it were proper at this time.

The Tenants to prevent an encrease of Rent upon the determination of their Leases, which they pretend to think is an hardship, or injustice done them by the Landlords, either in mistaken Policy or Spite, fall into the present mischievous methods of ruining both: The Landlord's Land is spoil'd for eight or ten Years, and the Tenant generally misses his aim of renewing his Lease at undervalue; for the common method is this; the Tenant when he finds he cannot renew upon his own Terms, towards the latter end of his Lease, does all he can to destroy his Farm, by turning up all the green Sward of it, and Plowing it all (sometimes even the Meadows) by taking false Crops, Pill-Fallowing, neglecting to Manure it, selling off all the Hay, Straw, and other Fulture of it, not giving it its due Seasons, suffering the Houses, Fences, and other Conveniencies or Ornaments

naments of it to run to decay, without any sufficient Remedy to the Landlords, for all this Waste; the Terms of *Stiff*, *Staunch* and *Tenantable*, being to be explain'd by a Jury of Farmers, and the Damages given, seldom answering the bare Costs of Suit. These Practices have enforced most Landlords of late, either to endeavour to tye up their Tenants from plowing at all (they being desirous to see the green Side of their Land remain uppermost) or else to take their Estates into their own Hands and Management, and turn Husbandmen themselves, till they can bring their Land into good Heart again, by letting it run waste for four or five Years, or by a good and chargeable Husbandry; — so as by Degrees to be fit to bear Corn with profit.

What Gentleman would be at the Expence and Pains of this, cou'd he hope to sett his Lands to honest or improving Tenants, and at so good a Rate as the Improvement of the Kingdom, and the present Price of Provisions bear, in proportion to what they were formerly held at?

I have

I have mentioned some, and will proceed to other of the Practices of Tenants among us, in relation to their Farms; contrary to the Custom of *England*, and of other thriving Countries: The Remedies will appear afterwards more plainly.

In the first Place, He will not be satisfied, unless he has a long Lease of Lives of forty, fifty or sixty Years, that he may sell it; and 'tis rare to find a Tenant in *Ireland*, contented with a Farm of a moderate Size: He pretends he cannot maintain his Family with less than a hundred Acres, nay (if at any distance from Town) two or three hundred Acres. Now I say, that this (for a Plowing Farm) is more than any Man of a moderate Fortune and Stock can manage: His Contrivance therefore, is to bring in one or more Partners, or Cottagers, who shall pay him one third more per Acre than he pays by his Lease to his Landlord; he himself not having Mony or Stock to sett his Affairs a going for so large a Quantity of Land. These Partners or Cottagers being not only Beggars and Thieves, but generally

Harbourers of all such, are the Destroyers of all Farms : They plow up three Parts of four of the Land, without regard to Seasons or Manuring. They sow false Crops, Pill-fallow, break Fences, cut down Quicksetts and other Trees, for Fireing, or to mend their Carrs, spoil Copses, dig their Turf irregularly in Pits and Holes. These sell their Straw and Hay, which ought to make Fulture and be expended on their Farms ; and indeed, seldom have convenient Folds to feed their Beasts, and to collect it in : And if both they and their Principal do not break before the Expiration of the Lease (which is commonly the Case) they sling up the Farm in a much worse Condition, than 'twas in when first taken.

The Remedy for this is, not to sett to any Tenant for too long a Term, nor more Land or a greater Farm than he and his own Family or Servants can manage and wield after a husbandly Manner, with his own Stock and Substance ; without his Letting any part of it off to others ; and to make it Penal if he does so. And to prescribe some Methods whereby the Landlord may easily recover

ver such Penalties. In *England* you seldom or never hear of such a thing as a Sub-tenant or Tenant's Tenant: Every Man resides on his Farm, and manages it in Person. Whereas here you shall often see three or four Setts of Tenants, one under another, who all live by that Difference (as the Cant was in the *South-Sea-Cheat*) and the last poor miserable Tenant must make what he can of the Farm, by all the evil Usage of it imaginable: Perhaps this poor Sub-tenant's Bargain is to pay double Rent of what the first Tenant is to pay by Lease to the Prime Landlord; and 'tis ten to one, that this Man breaks and runs away, but not till he has destroy'd the Farm, at least, his part of it.

There are a sort of People, and those not of inconsiderable Figure in the World, who have made it their Business to take long Leases of Farms in abundance, in several Counties and Provinces, on purpose to Lett them out again to Underlings; these Land-jobbers ought to be discouraged all manner of Ways. Some of them have made vast Estates this Way, I have heard of an Alderman of a considerable

derable Corporation, not far from *Dublin*, who did so. The fleeing under Officers of the Revenue, try to encrease their Income by taking Leases in the Towns where they are employed, and then alienating those Leases for Mony, when they are removed (as they frequently are) to other Places.

In *England* 'tis taken for granted, that a Tenant who comes into a Farm of good Land, with the Grass side uppermost, at the usual Rent of Corn-Land in that Country, and obtains Liberty to break it up, or make his best of it by Plowing it, has a profit during the first four Years equal to the Value of the Inheritance of the Land. Few Landlords in this Kingdom are sensible of this, and therefore do not provide accordingly.

Nothing is more sure, than that twenty Acres rightly distributed and well husbanded, shall yield more profit to the Tenant (and do no harm to the Landlord) than a hundred Acres managed as in *Ireland*, by most of the Farmers there, with infinite Damage to Landlord and Tenant.

Another mischievous Practice of *Irish* Tenants is countenanc'd, by what they call *The Custom of the Country*:- In some Parts one way, in other Countries different; the Tenant plows all he can, and sows it the last Year (no matter whether with due regard to the Seasons or not) and then pays only the sixth, eighth or tenth Sheaff for the standing of his Corn. These Customs ought to be abolished, since 'tis certain, that the Land is more damaged this last Year, by this usage of the Tenant, and his carrying off all his last Crop of Straw, than most Landlords are aware of.

The true Time of the Year for a Tenant to enter into his Farm, is about *Michaelmas*, he generally enters to all the Fallows, and pays his Predecessor a known Rate for making them, as he is obliged to do. He enters to all the Manure of the Fold. And tho' by this Method he be a little out of Pocket, by paying his first half Years Rent beforehand, yet he finds his Accompt in it at long running; it may be in his next Crop. Now in *Ireland*, the Tenant usually enters at *Lady-Day* in *Lent*, or
May-

May-Day, and has the first Crop with the Straw and Fulture carryed quite off his Farm by *the Custom of the Country*, which impoverishes his Farm, and puts him behind hand extremely. The Remedy, is to order the Commencement of Farms on *Michaelmas-Day* or *Albolantide*, and to abolish these *Customs of the Country*.

To Sett a Farm to a Manufacturer, Tradesman or Shopkeeper, spoils both the Tradesman and ruins the Farm : For in a little Time, this Manufacturer not being able to mind two different sorts of Business, as they should be minded, is either obliged to quit his Trade and turn absolute Farmer, or else to Sett his Farm (or great part of it) to some neighbouring Farmer, who shall plough his Share for him by the Halves (he not keeping a Plough of his own) and thus he loses one half of his Straw, or sells his Corn growing; both which are a Destruction of his Farm. Now a Manufacturer or Tradesman in the *English* Country Towns, who designs to pursue his Trade, desires no more Land in the Neighbourhood, than will Summer and
Win-

Winter him two or three Cows, and a Horse or two ; for which he commonly pays a very extraordinary Rate.

The Alienation of Leases of Farms, nay even of Leases for Lives, notwithstanding all Covenants in the Leases to the contrary, is another ruinous Practice to the Landlord, who at first Setts his Land to an improving rich Tenant, as he thinks, and within a few Years, or Months, finds his Farm Stock-jobb'd to an Unthrift or a Beggar, who has neither the Skill nor the Will to improve it. If some Clause in a Law cou'd be contrived effectually, to prevent such Alienations, other than to the Wife, Children, or Executors of the first Farmer ; it would be of special Service to the Landlord and prevent Land-jobbing. And whereas, in *England*, no Tenant is permitted to sell Hay or Straw, but is obliged on severe Penalties to expend it all upon his Farm, and to make Fulture of it, the like Care ought to be taken to prevent *Irish* Tenants who are not Proprietors of Land, from selling their Hay and Straw ; and this would hinder the impoverishing of their Farms.

It were a point worthy of Consideration, Whether the forbidding the thatching of Houses with Straw, and instead thereof, to oblige the making use of *Sedg, Slate, Tile, or Shingles*, would not, at the same time contribute to the keeping of our Farms in good Plight by the Fulture, and to the Beauty and Convenience of our Buildings.

The Plowing with Oxen alone, or with Oxen and strong Horses before them, as is the Custom in the best Parts of *England*; shou'd be encouraged in this Kingdom. For tho' an Ox be a slow Beast in the Plough, yet he is sure and even in his Draught, very Manageable and Intelligent, and makes the best Beef after he is past his Work: Whereas, a lame Titt or Garran is good for nothing.

The Fulture which proceed from Oxen and black Cattle, is of the best Sort for Corn-Land; these eat the Straw, and preserves the Hay for Horses and Sheep in hard Winters. The Fulture having first passed thro' the Beasts Bellies, and being well digested when laid on the Land, heartens it extremely: But a thriving Farmer

Farmer will not content himself with the Dung of his own Fold, but every Time he goes to the Market Town, and carries his Cart loaded with his Corn thither, will (rather than bring it back empty) fill it with good Manure fit for the Use of his Field.

With this Usage, all the Common-field Lands in *England* have continually born good Corn, ever since the *Saxons* time, and will do so till Dooms-day. The Methods there taken are these, every Parish has three large Common-fields for Corn belonging to it (besides the Common for Pasture) wherein every Free-holder has his Share; one six Acres, another four, another eight or ten, according to his Substance; not lying *Contiguous* in each Field, but perhaps in two or three Places, according to the Quality of the Land: Two of these Fields are continually under Corn, *Viz.* one for the Winter Corn, and the other for the Summer: And the third is Fallow, and is well manured for the following Winter Corn-Crop or Barley, and thus it goes round with the three Common-fields: Lands thus well and husbandly managed, will never run out of

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heart in enclosed Farms; the Tenant has still a better Opportunity of Improvement, and by good and frequent Manuring, may afford to take three Crops before a Fallow: Otherwise, two Crops and a Fallow is the usual way of Husbandry, and 'tis esteemed very good Land which will answer this way of Management: This Method ought to be enjoined in this Kingdom, and then the Plough wou'd not be at all detrimental to the Estates of Landlords, consequently so many Farms wou'd not be turned to Grass, or taken into the Landlord's own hands; one of which, the Landlords are now enforced to do, unless they are content to lose half the Value of their Estates, by the ill husbandry of their Tenants.

If Gentlemen would so far understand their own Interests, as to be willing to serve upon petty Juries, when Titles to Land, and Damages for Trespases or Waste, are under Consideration, they would not be so much abused by those meaner Ranks of Men, who generally attend to serve upon Juries, and find their Account by doing so.

The

The *English* Customs in the Make and Fashion of their Ploughs, Harrows, Plough-geer, Carts, Tumbrils, Wains and Wagons in their broad Ridges, plowing with Oxen, Drains, Beast-houses, Hovels, Stand-racks, Folds in their way of laying down Land to Grass, even folding of Sheep in Pens upon their Corn Lands, and forty other Things necessary to the good Management of our Farms, ought either to be encouraged or enforced by proper Laws : And why should not this be done in these Instances, as well as in those of prohibiting burning Corn in the Straw, Drawing by the Tayl, or the enjoyning the *English* Habit and Language, &c. All which, the Wisdom of our Ancestors thought necessary ? And if a severe Penalty were put upon all Breakers or Plowers up of Meares and Bounds, whereby the stealing of Land (so common at present in every Village wherein there happens to be many Proprietors) might be prevented, it would be of great Service to the Publick.

And to obviate the evil Consequences which may ensue, upon Farmers selling,

or otherwise disposing of their whole Haggards of Corn, between *Harvest* and *Easter*, whereby the Country has often been in danger of a Famine, before new Corn came in again ; may it not be thought adviseable, to erect common Store-houses or Granaries, at the Charges of the Publick, in Cities or great Towns? where a sufficient Store of Corn may be yearly taken in, at the Market Price, after *Harvest* to be sold out again in Time of scarcity, at a profit not exceeding — *per Cent*? This would always prevent any extraordinary Dearth, and would be of some Gain to the Publick ; the common Bakers may be obliged to take of all such Corn, at a Price somewhat lower than Market Rate, before new Corn were brought into the Magazines.

Anciently, all the Guilds and Fraternities of Trades (especially in the City of *London*) were obliged to maintain such publick Granaries for the Use of their Fraternities ; and at present, the Cities of *Dantzick*, *Coningsbery*, and many others in the *East-Sea*, draw a very great Commerce and Profit to themselves ;

selves ; by this Practice these Cities have constantly such a Provision of Corn before hand, that they are able at any Time, to lade upon demand, a hundred great Ships with it ; they furnish *Holland*, and all other parts of *Europe* when Corn happens to be scarce : They have three Years Provision beforehand, with convenient large Magazines erected, with all Conveniencies for the better Preservation, Airing, and Winnowing of the Corn weekly, with sworn Officers to attend them ; and no Ship needs to tarry above three Days for its full Lading, the want of such Stores, prevents our Commerce for Corn, makes our Markets rise and fall so suddenly and unequally : We have either a Glutt or a Famine before we can look about us.

It would be a great Encouragement to the industrious Farmer, if the payment and gathering of Tythes were put upon a more easy and equal foot in this Kingdom. All who have right to Tythes, should be obliged to sett every Farmer his own Tythe, who would take it at the Rates which may be prescribed, The common Practice is now, to put such an

exor-

exorbitant Price upon a poor Farmer's Tythe, that although he can best afford it, yet he is not able to pay what is demanded, then some Tythe-jobber (commonly a litigious, worthless wrangling Fellow, a *Papist* and a Stranger) is encouraged to bid high, on purpose to raise the Market: And if the Farmer is constrained, by reason of the Exorbitancy of the Demand, to let this Fellow have the Bargain, this Tythe-jobber puts all the Hardships imaginable on the poor Farmer to make his Mony. The *Bishops Courts* are generally inclinable to be favourable to these Plagues of the Common-Wealth, because they help to inhance the Churches gains; nay, in case they have overstrained themselves, and taken to hard a Bargain, their good Intention is valued, and they are often forgiven one third Part by him that has set them a Work; otherwise they break, having first carryed off so much of the Hay and Straw (consequently of the Future) off the Farm, as helps very much to the impoverishing it. There are more just Complaints against such Tythe-jobbers in *Ireland*, ten times over, than there are in *Great Britain*. There-

Therefore an Act of Parliament to ascertain the Tythe of Hops, now in the Infancy of that great growing Improvement, Flax, Hemp, Turnip Fields, Grass Seeds and dyeing Roots, or Herbs of all Mines, Coals, Minerals, Commons to be taken in, &c. seems necessary towards the encouragement of them.

Gentlemen who take to Farm Lands, adjoining to their Freeholds for the conveniency of themselves or their Tenants wou'd do well to consider whether their claiming and seizing upon any part or parcel of such Farm'd Lands for their own, and refusing to surrender at the expiration of their Leases be of Credit to them; really People will be afraid to accommodate this way, Gentlemen who act as if they thought themselves too great to be cop'd with, and no wise Man will be willing to sett his Land either to his equal or superior.

Farmers or their under Cottagers are very apt now a days to take in, and enclose all the broad High-ways on each side of the Paved Causeys adjoining to their Farms, to the great disease of Travellers, who otherwise might (in Summer time
especi-

especially) avoid the rugged Pavement, which is sometimes so narrow, that scarce two Carts can pass by each other with safety.

A Breed of large working Horses, not Racers, ought to be encouraged instead of those Titts or Garrans, which are generally made use of among our Farmers; the neighbouring Gentlemen should keep Stallions, and permit the use of them gratis to their Tenants. There are a set of People called Carrmen, who hold not an Acre of Land, but keep these filthy halfstarved Titts, either by nightly Stealing their Neighbours Grass and Hay, or by what they can pick up in the Highways, or the bare Commons; these Bel-lows cut and destroy Quick-sett Hedges, and young Woods, for Wyths, Gads, and other Implements for their Carrs, &c. and therefore ought to be suppressed.

I think it may easily be proved that Commons in general are a Grievance and Nufance to this Kingdom, and serve principally as Seminaries to Beggars, Idlers, and Thieves; so far are they from being a relief to the Poor, that they really make and encourage them: Gen-
tlemen

tlemen are inclosing them in *England* as fast as they can, and there hardly passes a Session of Parliament there, wherein two or three Acts for taking in particular large Commons, have not the Royal Assent. The primary intention of Commons was not for Beggars, but for the Farmers Cattle, whilst their Field Lands were under Corn: And it has upon Trials at Law been determined in *England*, that no Man has a right to Herbage on a Common, but such in the Parish or Mannor as hold sufficient Land, there to Winter those Cattle which they graze on the Common in Summer; which Cattle must be *Levant* and *Coyebant* on the said Farm Lands; but this is a point which must be left to the Lawyers; as also, whether there can be any such thing as an untinted Common; I have been assured there cannot, not even in Wilds and Mountains: A brave Fund for one Provision for the Poor might arise from hence.

One hindrance to the conveniency of Farmers (especially of late since the Revolution) is, that very many of the common Roads cross the Country, leading from

from Village to Village, to Mill, Church, Sea and Market, have been stopp'd up by Gentlemen for the conveniency of their own Estates and Improvements; these have taken the advantage of the unsettled state of late times, and of the fearfulness of *Popish* Tenants, who dare not contest with them, and have really spoiled that intercourse which is so necessary to be kept up between Neighbours for the benefit of the Publick.

I am sorry to find it remarked by *English* Gentlemen who come among us (and I fear too truly) that very many of our Gentlemen of *Ireland*, are constrained to manage their own Lands, and turn their own Husband-men, that they may avoid the destruction of their Estates by bad Tenants: This forces them in a manner to employ most part of their time in these low Emyloyments and mean Company, to frequent Fairs and Markets, to mind their own Ploughs, Sheep and Cattle; thus they lose the best opportunities of reading and improving their natural Parts, which if cultivated, do not come behind those of our neighbouring Nation; but their Conversation being for the most part with the ordinary rank of
Men

Men, they degenerate by degrees; the best Education of many of their Sons, reaching no higher, than to know how to make the most of a Piece of Land. How can the Business of Parliament, the Duty owing to ones Country, and the Value of Publick Liberty, be sufficiently understood, under such a cramp'd, and low Education, help'd by little or no reading? The Consequences of which, are that they grow narrow Spirited, covetous and ungentle; they are more subject to the snares and temptations of little Employments for themselves or relations, Smiles, good Dinners, Threatnings, &c. and in short, their Morals and Principles grow so debas'd, that except it be some Gentlemen of the Gown, and many of the Army (where, I know none that have excell'd them) 'tis a shame to see in so large and plentiful a Kingdom, how low the rate of generous and polite Learning runs among our Nobility and Gentry: 'Tis true, we are told we are Slaves, but it must be our Care not to deserve being so.

The Tythes, or other profits in lieu of Tythes, which are paid by the *Roman*

Catholicks to their Parish Priests (over and above what they pay to the Protestant Parson, or his tything Man) are such drains to their Purses, that 'tis a wonder how they can subsist and pay Rent under such an additional burden. I should think it no ill Policy or Husbandry, if the Publick paid the yearly Salaries to the *Popish* Priests, as the *Dutch* do to their Protestant ones, and that the poor Lay *Roman Catholick* Tenants were eas'd of it; This Contribution wou'd amount to no great Sum on the Establishment; five or six great unnecessary Pensions suppress'd, wou'd answer it; and this wou'd be one principal means to engage the Priests (as the *Dutch* do theirs) in the true interest of the Government: This Method has the less to be objected to it, now the *Popish* Priests are registr'd; but to expect to have a numerous People, without allowing the Exercise of a Religion, is both Tyrannical and Impolitick: Care may be taken at the same time to keep out the Regulars, and the Secular Priests wou'd contribute their assistance towards the doing it.

Now as to *Agriculture*, I should humbly propose, that a School for Husbandry
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were erected in every County, wherein, an expert Master of the *English* methods, shou'd teach at a fix'd yearly Salary; and that *Tusser's* old Book of Husbandry shou'd be taught to the Boys, instead of a Primer or Psalter; to read, to copy, and to get it by heart, to which end it might be re-printed and distributed; and let nobody object, that 'tis *old English*; we are not teaching Words, but Things: I am sure, 'tis the very best *English* Book of good Husbandry and Housewifry that ever was published, fitted for the use of mean Men and Farmers, and ordinary Families. In these Schools, I wou'd not have any precepts, difference or distinction of Religions taken notice of, and nothing taught, but only Husbandry and good Manners; and that the Children should daily serve G O D, according to their own Religions, this School not being the proper place to make Profelytes in: I doubt not but some such Method as this wou'd make Husband-men, and prevent the increase of the Poor.

In many parts of *Ireland*, more especially near the great City of *Dublin*, the Women and Wives of the poor small Farmers

mers, and Labourers, are generally of little or no Service towards the maintenance of their Families, not applying themselves to any useful Work, whereby to earn Wages; but if the poor Man fall sick, whose labour put Bread in their Mouths, or if he dye, the whole Family starves; this idle way of Life inclines them to thieving and harbouring of Thieves. In Harvest time, instead of helping to gather in the Corn, they refuse Wages, and find it more profitable to run about the Country, Gleaning or Leasing (as they call it) teaching their Children laziness and wickedness: And their way of Leasing among the very Reapers and Stacks of Corn, ought to be forbidden by a Law, upon penalty of being duck'd, or some other disgraceful corporal Punishment. 'Tis not to be imagined, what great damage this sort of Cattle do to the most industrious Farmers, who (when you find fault with them for permitting it) will shake their heads and answer you, that 'tis a grievance grown so common, 'tis in vain to attempt to remedy it, without the help of a Law; and that they yearly lose near a tenth of their Crop this way.

way. I have seen near a hundred of these Leasers in a Corn-field at once, whilst the Corn has been a Reaping, and whilst the poor Farmer has been chasing them out of one corner of his Field, they have poured in as fast at another, and carried off all they cou'd lay their hands on, even out of the Sheaves and Stacks.

Now in *England*, the Women and Children will assist at Harvest work, and earn their groat and two pence *per* day, and when they Glean, they are not permitted to begin, till the Corn is Carted out of the Field: But whilst People find their account much more in Stealing *impunè*, than in Working, they will never Work, let the Season of the year be never so rainy or doubtful.

I shou'd think it no sin, in bad Harvest Weather, to constrain and oblige People to Work on Holy-days, nay sometimes on Sunday's afternoon, for by the same reason that an Ox or an Ass might be helped out of a Ditch, by the strictest observers of the Sabbath, a Field of good Corn in imminent danger of spoiling, may be secured by us, who lay not so great stress upon the observation of Sunday's

days: I am sure they are generally spent in sinful Employments: No one who can think well of a Book of Sports for that day, can make any rational objection to this necessary and charitable Work.

The want of Barns and Folds, with conveniencies of Beast-houses, Stables, Hovels, and Stand-Racks; the want of proper Husbandry Geer, viz. Carts, right Ploughs and Harrows, well contriv'd Drains, broad Ridges, and twenty other things towards the Improvement of *Agriculture*, are but too visible in this Kingdom; the number and use of all which, will be learnt by reading *Tusser's Book of Husbandry*; as also the several sorts of Manure, viz. Lime, Sea Sand, scourings of old Ditches and Ponds, Sea Weed, &c. according to the situation, and suited to the several different Soils: All this and much more may be met with in old *Tusser's Book*, which therefore cannot be too often recommended.

The Acts of Parliament for encouraging Planting and preserving Trees, and obliging Tenants to the due performance of Covenants (which now they generally neglect) want therefore to be reinforced,

ced. This in process of time wou'd make this naked Kingdom full of Fruit Trees, and replenish it with necessary Timber Trees, which now it wants to a degree, not known elsewhere in *Europe*. We shall soon see an end of Tanning and Building, not so much as a Ship or a Boat will be upon the Stocks, if very speedy and effectual care be not taken in this most necessary point. We must not depend upon the Woods of *Norway*, which upon any Quarrel between Princes wou'd fail us, and (without that) will be quite consumed in one Generation, being already generally cut down, especially near the Sea side; but in the mean while, care ought to be taken of such Buildings as we have, and the Dilapidations and waste committed by Tenants on Farms, ought to be prevented and punished. There are Laws in *England* against Farm Houses being demolished, which oblige even the very Proprietors of Estates.

What if a Premium were rais'd upon the several Counties, and given at Assizes time, in proportion, to the five best Husband-men in that County, for four or five Years to come? He that cou'd bring

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the best proof of Increase of Crop, Goodness of his Corn, Diligence in Manuring, &c. and all this, thro' his following the prescribed good Methods of Husbandry, shou'd be intitled to the best reward, and the other four in their Order; this to be determined by a Grand Jury of Gentlemen. I remember such a Law for the three best pieces of Linnen Cloath, in each County; but this Law was enervated by the partiality of young Jury Men, who gave the Præmium to the three handsomest Girls, according to the interest they cou'd make with the Body of the County.

The keeping of our Corn and Hay so long abroad in Stacks, and in the Fields, is a great waste: As 'tis never practised in *England*, so it ought to be forbidden here; where one often sees, one fourth part, both of Corn and Hay, destroyed in the Fields before 'tis carried home.

All Farmers and Cottagers in places where firing is scarce, and cannot be had for Labour, ought to be obliged (or their Landlords for them) to lay in such a competent store yearly, about *Michaelmas*, of Coals, Turf, Wood or Furr, as

as shall serve them during six Months in Winter: And the Constable of each Parish ought to make a return about *All-hallantide*, to two Justices of Peace in the Neighbourhood, of all the Farmers and Cottagers in their several Parishes, who have neglected this; which Justices should be impowered to take effectual Measures for the Performance. This would prevent the cutting down of Trees and Hedges for Firing, the cutting or plucking of the Hawm of our Corn Fields, and the gathering of the Cow Dung, which ought to be part of the Manure of those Fields; and several other Mischiefs arising from the want of Firing of that sort of People, who depend upon such kind of Trespases, for all they shall burn in the Winter.

A Penalty might be put upon all menders of Carrs, and all makers of Gadds, With's and other Carr-tackle, with young Trees or Hedg-Inclosures: And to this Purpose, every Farmer might be oblig'd to sow a Proportion of Hempseed sufficient to furnish him with such Tackle: And those who hold no grazing Land, or not sufficient, should be hindred from

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keeping Carrs and Horses ; the Trade of such being no other than downright Thievery.

The Parish Cesses are now made generally, and applotted either by the meanest sort of People, or by Persons interested : And the Mony given at Quarter-Sessions and at King's-Bench, for High-ways, &c. is for the most part put into designing Mens Hands, who will bribe a Sub-sheriff to be put upon the Grand Jury, with the Prospect of being made an Overseer ; whereby our High-ways (which if they be good, are a great Encouragement to the Farmer) become scarce passable in Winter : If Gentlemen for their own sakes, would take part of this Trouble on themselves, the Country would not be so much abused as it now generally is. The like caution might be taken, in regard to Church-Wardens, Overseers of the Poor, Sacrament-Money, and other Charities, that all should go the right Way, as they are intended : I doubt not but Gentlemen will understand what I mean. I look upon the frequency of Briefs to be a Grievance, and since the Methods of ob-

obtaining them is no secret, I esteem the Way of collecting the Monies for them (not as formerly, at the Church-doors, but in the Face of the whole Congregation, in some remarkable Part of the Divine-Service; when all the Parishioners are likeliest to be present) to be an Invention within my Memory, calculated to work, rather on the Modesty, than the Charity of the Congregation.

The Mischief of many Holy-days, not only of the *Popish* ones, but even of many of our Church Holy-days, is really greater than most People are sensible of. 'Tis proclaimed on Sunday from the Desk, that such and such a Day in the following Week is appointed to be kept holy. And what is the Effect of this? Why truly, to give Warning, that all those in the Parish, who have a mind to be idle, drunk or debauch'd, may take that Day, as the fittest Opportunity to put their wicked Designs in Execution. I appeal to all the Clergymen in *Ireland*, whether what I say, be not constantly and literally true. I wish all the Saints Days were let slip, with all my Heart, and that People might be left at liberty to keep open

open Shop, plow, sow, reap and follow their lawful Trades on those Days ; they would serve God better, and their Country and private Families, than now they do. As for the more solemn Days, of *Christmas*, and a few others, they ought to be observed by Devotion, not Luxury. I once heard a Merchant of *Leghorn* arguing, why the *Dutch* must necessarily be richer than the *Italians*, who are the skilfullest Merchants, and best Accompanants in the World, Can it be otherwise ? (*said he*) the *Dutch* have about a hundred Days more in the Year to get Money in, than we are permitted to have by our Religion ; and this overballances all other Advantages we have over them in Parts, Sobriety and Stock.

Great Indulgence ought to be shewn to Farmers, and all sorts of Poor, who are overburden'd with many Children ; these should be eas'd in their Taxes, Parish Cesses and Offices : I mean such Children, as are the product of Matrimony ; but if they be such, as are every where permitted, most shamefully to live under Hedges, in Ditches and Hutts, worse

worse than Hogsties ; from whence you shall often see creeping out like Vermin, whole swarms of Bastards ; the Produce of Adultery and Incest, and whereof, there are more in the Neighbourhood of *Dublin*, than any other part of the World ; a Race of People like *Gypsies*, which no Priest takes any care of ; yet are the Seminaries of all Rebellions, dangerous in Plague Times, revengeful at all Times, in burning Barns and Houses of such as are not kind to them, and Harbourers of Robbers : I say, if they be such sort of People, the Magistrate is obliged to root them out, or send them home, if they have a home ; but they are most commonly *Aborigines*, the Product of that very Ditch where you find them, who would be hard put to it, to tell you the Relation they have to each other, all the Rules of Affinity and Consanguinity being confounded. These should be shipped off to the wildest of our Plantations abroad, and left there to their chance in this World, and the Children of them should be placed for long Terms of Years with Rope-makers, Cobblers, Smiths, Owners of Ships, and other hard working Trades.

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And now, that I have made mention of Ships, and His Grace our Lord Lieutenant has recommended to our Care, some Provision for the Poor, let our Fishery (in God's Name) find Employment for many thousands of them, in the Seas round about this Island. I need not mention how many natural Advantages we enjoy beyond any part of *Europe*, proper for this great and most beneficial Trade, the very fountain of Riches, the encrease of Seamen, and the food of Land-men: And if this of our Fishery happens to be annexed to a certain Monopoly and Company of Men, who design nothing less than to put it in Practice; but like the Dog in the Manger, which neither eats Hay himself, nor suffers the working Horse to do it, let, I say, Application be made speedily, to set us at liberty, that no Monopolies may obstruct the right of Nature and Charity: If we have any Freedom, let some Use be made of it, and the Application of it be this way.

A Residency of our Protestant Clergy in their Parishes, wou'd soon make Protestant Congregations, and increase those

those that already are made, and no effectual care can be taken of the Poor, till the Parson bestows his pains upon the Parish, and shall rather endeavour to make Protestants, than his Parish a perfect Sinecure, as some have done: And truly in my Opinion, all Sinecures are publick Grievances: The no Labourer is worthy of no Hire. I do not wonder at the little Scruple that is made of defrauding such a Parson of his Tythes. Whereas, I look upon it as one of the most crying pieces of Injustice, to cheat a worthy residing Clergyman of what he is firmly intitled to, by the Laws of the Land: Not *jure divino*; unless he could prove the Jewish Law binds Protestants. I cannot bear with Patience, that any Man shou'd pretend to have a higher or better Title to his Estate, than I have to mine.

Let Gentlemen consider, whether it be equal, that a small Lease of Lives, worth barely forty Shillings *per Annum*, should make such a Freehold, as gives a Title to choose a Representative in Parliament; when a large and beneficial Lease for a Term of Years, sets the

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Lessee only upon the Foot of one of the *Nomine censi* among the Romans, who had no Suffrage, nor any part in the Government of the Common-Wealth; to me it looks a little oddly.

By the little Care that is taken in the Connection of the foregoing Paragraphs, which are put down just as they came into the Writers Head, the Reader may easily perceive, that either the want of Leisure, or want of Health, or a too forward Zeal to publish something speedily, which might be of Service to the Country, has prevailed with the Author of these few Pages, beyond any Consideration of his Reputation.

~~F I N I S.~~

